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VOLUME SIX ISSUE #18**



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1840-0 Half Dollars

by

John W. McCloskey

The Liberty Seated half dollar was first struck in New Orleans in 1840. This date was the first in the half dollar series to have a mintmark on the reverse die, the mintmark appearing on the obverse over the date during the two previous years. Available information on the 1840-0 half is frequently incomplete and in many cases confusing. Taxay lists three mintmark sizes for the 1840-0 half in Scott's Encyclopedia but gives no details on relative size of the three varieties. Beistle lists five different reverse varieties but mentions only two different mintmark sizes. This article has been prepared in an attempt to accurately describe the different varieties and to present pictures of the ones that I have been able to identify.

Over the last two years I have made an effort to examine all the 1840-0 halves available at shows I have attended. During this period I have been able to identify three mintmark sizes and seven different reverses for this date. Several seem to match the descriptions given by Beistle but I don't believe I have identified all those that he has listed.



1840-0 HALF, obverse of Variety 1

For the lack of better terminology I will use Taxay's description of Large, Medium and Small to describe the three mintmark sizes on the 1840-0 half. Details for those pieces are listed below.

1. 1840-0 Small 0 mintmark. Small circular mintmark measures almost 1.0mm tall and 1.0mm wide, about 65% as tall as the lettering. High mintmark, set close to the crotch of the feather and the stem and 1.6mm over the right side of the letter F. On later strikes a die crack develops from the middle talon of the left claw, across the field through the right edge of the L in HALF and on to the denticles. This piece is an example of what Beistle describes as 1-A as it has the low date, the three full lines of drapery and the two pin head lumps in front of the foot that he lists as diagnostic characteristics for the obverse.



1840-0 HALF, Variety 1 with Small 0 Mintmark

2. 1840-0 Medium 0 mintmark. Medium oval mintmark measuring 1.1mm tall and 0.9mm wide, about 70% as tall as the lettering. Mintmark centered in field, directly below the feather and 0.9mm over the center of the letter F. Multiple die cracks have been seen on the reverse. One runs from the denticles below the U in UNITED, through the field, through the tip of the left wing and on into the two uppermost leaves. A second crack runs from the denticles through the left foot of the A in STATES, through the field and into the left wing, vertically down the left wing until it joins the first crack near the wing tip. Another crack runs from the denticles through the I in AMERICA, through the lower part of the right wing, through the right claw, through the shafts of the two arrows and into the stem of the olive branch. A final crack runs from the denticles through the center of the H in HALF, up into the left claw. On the obverse there are two full lines of drapery and the date is set high. This is undoubtedly an example of what Beistle calls 2-B but as such it is important to recognize that he does not distinguish between the size of the mintmark on this and the preceding variety.



1840-0 HALF, Variety 2 with Medium 0 Mintmark

3. 1840-0 Large 0 mintmark. Large mintmark measuring 1.4mm tall and 1.2mm wide, about 90% as tall as lettering. Mintmark set high in the field, centered under the crotch of the feather and the stem, 1.1mm over the right side of the letter F. Multiple die cracks develop on reverse. A crack runs from the left claw down through the center of the L in HALF to the denticles. Another runs from the right claw through the tip of the stem, down through the left edge of the O in DOL, to the denticles. Another crack runs from the top of the letters ST, over the A to the rim over the second T in STATES. Another runs from the denticles to the tip of the lowest arrow. Another runs from the denticles to the second A in AMERICA to the right wing. Still another from the denticles through the M in AMERICA to the right wing. A final crack runs from the left wing to the uppermost leaf. On the obverse there is only one partial line of drapery and the date is set low. This is most likely the variety that Beistle calls 3-C although he does not mention any of the die cracks that develop on the reverse.



1840-0 HALF, Variety 3 with Large 0 Mintmark

4. 1840-0 Large 0 mintmark. Large mintmark measuring 1.4mm tall and 1.2mm wide, about 90% as tall as lettering. Mintmark set high in the field, centered under the feather and 1.1mm over the upright of the letter F. A die crack runs from the denticles through the right edge of D in UNITED, across the eagle's left wing and down along the left side of the shield to the right claw. A second crack runs from the field through the right claw, through the L in DOL and into the denticles. A final crack runs from the denticles through the E in UNITED. The obverse has three full lines of drapery and the date is set low. This variety would appear to be an example of what Beistle calls 4-E but as such it should be noted that the second die crack goes through the L in DOL and not the L in HALF as described in the Beistle text.



1840-0 HALF, Variety 4 with Large 0 Mintmark

5. 1840-0 Large 0 mintmark. Large mintmark measuring 1.4mm tall and 1.2mm wide, about 90% as tall as lettering. Mintmark a little high in the field, centered under the tip of the feather and 0.9mm over the left edge of the letter F. A crack runs from the denticles through the left upright of the letter U and on into the left wing. A second crack runs from the top of the eagle's head through the left edge of the second S in STATES and on to the denticles. Another crack runs from the right wing and out into the field also toward the second S in STATES. Another crack runs from the tip of the stem to the top of the letter O in DOL. and then on from the base of the O to the denticles. A final crack runs from the lowest leaf to the center of the letter H in HALF. On the obverse there are three full lines of drapery and the date is set low in the field. This variety doesn't seem to match any of those listed by Beistle.



UNLISTED VARIETY

1840-0 HALF, Variety 5 with Large 0 Mintmark

6. 1840-0 Large 0 mintmark. Large mintmark measuring 1.4mm tall and 1.2mm wide, about 90% as tall as lettering. Mintmark a little high in the field, under the feather and 0.9mm over the center of the letter F. A die crack runs from the right claw, down through the lowest arrow, running down just to the right of L in DOL and into the denticles. A second crack runs from the right claw, through both arrow shafts, through the stem, through the right side of the 0 mintmark, through the center of the F in HALF and into the denticles. A final crack runs from the left wing to the uppermost leaf. On the obverse there are three lines of drapery and the date is set high in the field. This variety does not match any of those listed by Beistle.



UNLISTED VARIETY

1840-0 HALF, Variety 6 with Large 0 Mintmark

7. 1840-0 Large 0 mintmark. Large mintmark measuring 1.4mm tall and 1.2mm wide, about 90% as tall as lettering. Mintmark set high in the field, mostly under the feather and 1.0mm over the left side of the letter F. A strong die crack runs from the denticles through the center of the letter D in DOL, through the stem, through both feathered arrow shafts, up along the right side of the shield and out through the top of the right wing, on into the letter M and then into the denticles. A second crack runs from the end of the upper feathered shaft through the left leg, out into the field and then through the left wing. On the obverse there is only one full line of drapery and the date is centered in the field. This variety does not match any of those listed by Beistle.



1840-0 HALF, Variety 7 with Large 0 Mintmark

UNLISTED VARIETY

The 1840-0 half dollar makes an interesting subject for numismatic study for several reasons. Specifically, it is the first Liberty Seated branch mint issue in the series. The 1840-0 is the only New Orleans half known to have three distinct mintmark sizes. Furthermore, all seven of the varieties that I have identified come with die cracks that wander through the reverse design. These cracks make it possible to accurately identify the different varieties and are responsible for a number of different die states as the cracks increase in strength with continued die wear.

Additional varieties likely exist for this date. I have been unable to locate a piece with the characteristics and die cracks described for Reverse D as listed by Beistle. With a mintage close to a million, enough examples of this date can be found to provide the basis for an extensive research effort. With continued study and a new awareness on the part of the collector we can hopefully identify any yet unlisted varieties.

I want to thank Randy Wiley for reviewing the manuscript of this article and for his contributions to its contents. Randy was able to add Variety 7 to those pieces on my list and to present additional information on those varieties that I already had listed.

The pictures of the 1840-0 halves were taken by Tom Mulvaney at Paramount International Coin Corp.

Unique 1870-S Half Dime Sold

The unique 1870-S half dime has been sold for \$425,000 to Abbott's Rare Coins in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. The piece was on display at the Spring Convention of the Michigan State Numismatic Society and was purchased from Ed Milas of RARCOA on April 16, 1980 in a private sale.

The 1870-S half dime was first put on display at the Houston ANA in August, 1978 by RARCOA and created a sensation among Seated collectors. The date had not previously been known to exist and there was considerable discussion and speculation as to how the piece could escape documentation by the numismatic community for over a century. The coin has been carefully studied and authenticated by such experts as Walter Breen and Kamal Ahwash. It is a beautifully toned uncirculated specimen and a very important addition to the Seated coin series.



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A Look at the "Inside" Drapery on Some Liberty Seated Half Dimes

by
Chuck and Marian Leber

The drapery which characterizes the clothing on the Liberty Seated device (Hughes design) has always been important in identifying certain types of Liberty Seated coinage. However most of the attention has been given to the drapery on the right side (or outside) of the pole on the obverse, between the lower arm and knee area. Maybe it's time to take a look at the drapery **inside** the pole, that area which is bordered by the waist, the upper arm, the pole, and the upper left leg of Miss Liberty.

Our attention was drawn to the **inside** drapery area of Liberty Seated half dimes by a very odd configuration of design in this area on an 1854 with arrows half dime. The startling design we found in the "armpit" area on this particular specimen led us to examine the **inside** drapery on many more 1854 half dimes, and then on to other Hughes design (with drapery) dates in our extensive half dime collection and in the show cases of many dealers.

The results of this search have opened up for us a whole new area of consciousness about the many differences which exist in this **inside** drapery area of Seated half dimes. Some of the changes we found were clearly die-clash marks. But some of them appear to be the results of different kinds of engraving from different hubs, some due to die wear, and some others seem to be from re-engraving in this area on different dies. It is

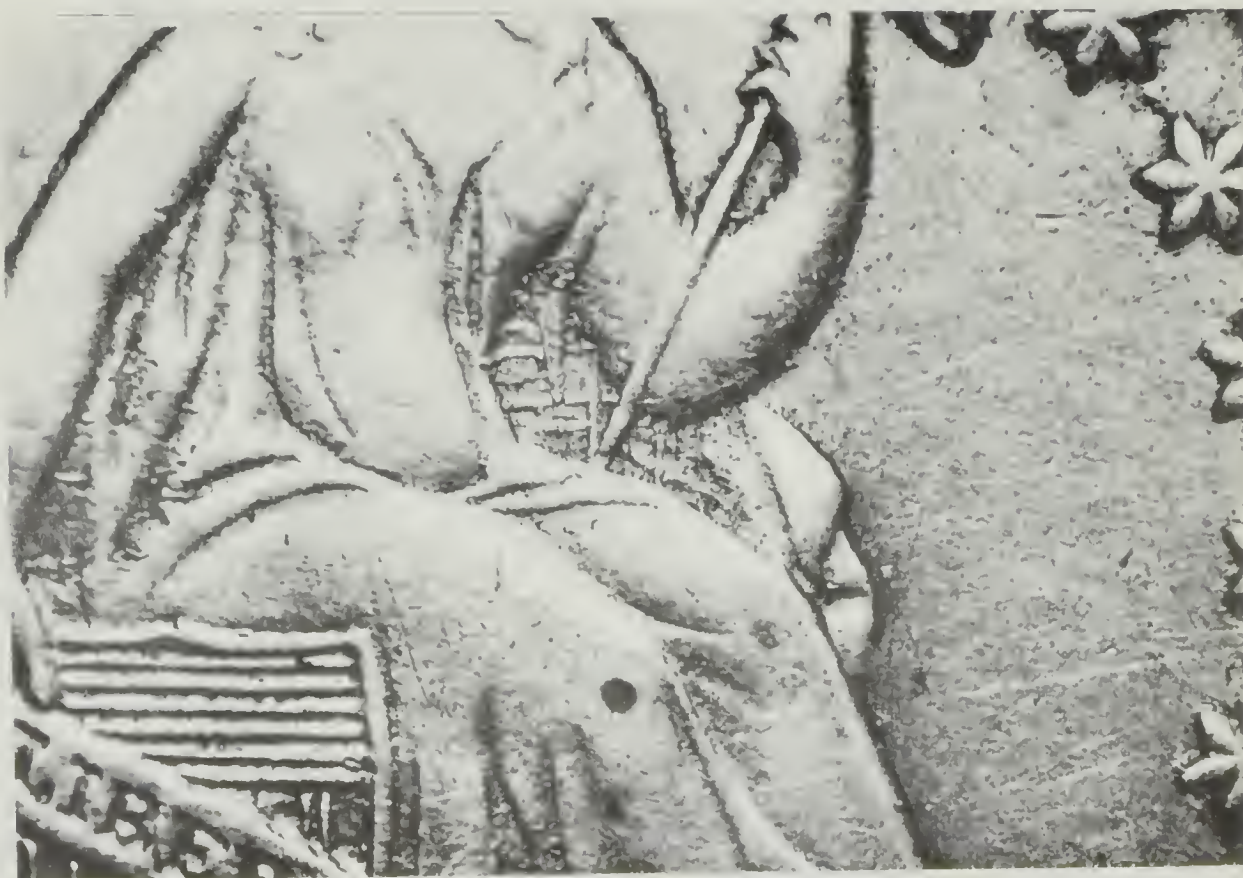


1848 HALF DIME
Showing Drapery for Stars Obverse Design

interesting to note that this **inside** drapery area on half dimes shows little or no wear on circulated coins in the higher grades, so an uncirculated specimen is not needed to be sure of the special characteristics and changes made in the “underarm” drapery area.

As a general rule we found that the design of this **inside** drapery changes as the major type category changes. The half dimes with stars on the obverse (1841-59) have the larger crescent-shaped fold of drapery next to the waist, and the smaller, narrower fold is alongside the upper arm above the pole. This is reversed on the half dimes with the legend on the obverse (1860-73): the drapery fold next to the waist is the smaller and thinner one, while the fold next to the upper arm is the larger one. These can be easily seen with a good magnifying glass.

Another result of our search through the **inside** drapery area of more than 300 Liberty Seated half dimes was the wide variety of strange patterns of design which emerged in this area of these coins. But the most amazing example is our 1854 half dime “discovery” coin which is pictured. It shows a very strong cross-hatched design, a plaidlike pattern of “threads” which are horizontal and vertical in this underarm area, without any drapery showing - except the icicle-shaped vertical formation, which descends from the upper arm like a small stalactite. Interestingly, there are a few other horizontal “threads” to be found in the folds of drapery on the left side of the figure of Liberty Seated and one in the first star. There are also



1854 HALF DIME
with Plaid Like Design to Inner Drapery

traces of thread-like design around the arm holding the pole, and up toward the back of the neck - with another small thread connecting the pole to the arm in the narrow space below the wrist.

We have seen similar cross-hatching on a few other 1854 half dimes but not on any other dates. The 1850-0 is the only one which comes close. These 1854 half dimes seem to have the most startling examples of changes on the **inside** drapery, whatever the causes for these “underarm” varieties may be. Could someone explain them?

We hope our explorations will help “raise the consciousness” of other collectors of Liberty Seated coins, especially half dime collectors, in order to notice, enjoy, discover, and perhaps classify the differences in this area of our favorite coinage.

The pictures of the half dimes in this article were taken by Tom Mulvaney at Paramount International Coin Corp.



1854 HALF DIME
with Die Clash Marks Visible in Inner Drapery



1873-S HALF DIME

Showing Drapery for Legend Obverse Design. Note the large lump on the upper arm caused by a die defect. This variety is pictured by Valentine as the V-1 variety for this date but no mention of the die damage is made.

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Another 1873 No Arrows Open 3 Half Discovered

The 9th known example of the very rare 1873 No Arrows Open 3 half dollar has recently been discovered and added to the list of known specimens. The new piece was purchased by Kam Ahwash at Paramount's 1979 Grand Central Auction in New York on November 3, 1979. It was one of three coins listed in lot #1402 and is described as being in VF condition. Keep looking, you never know when you will have an opportunity to buy a prized rarity.



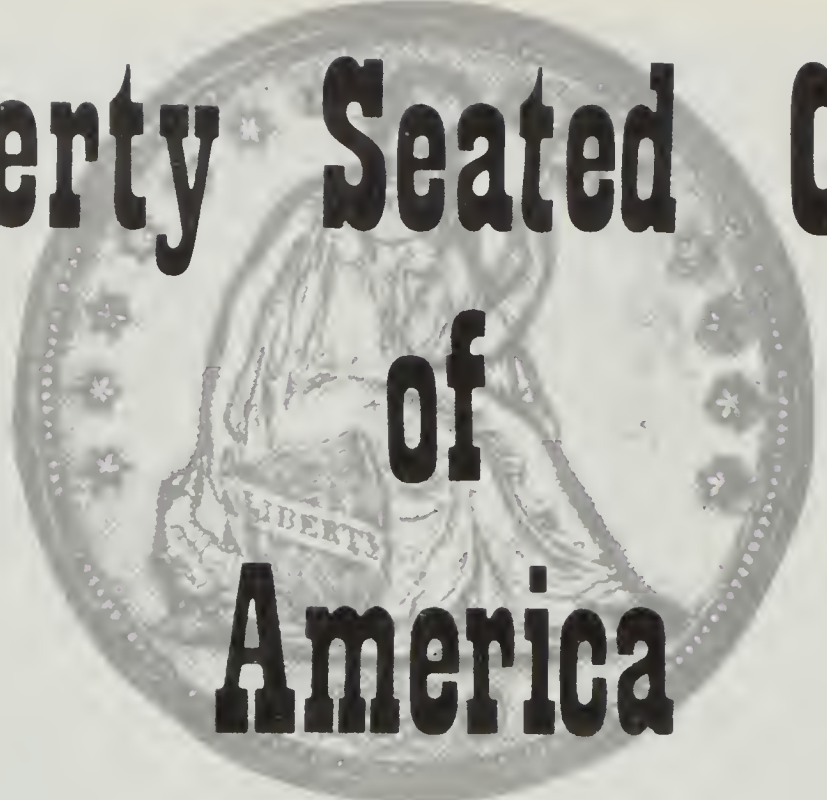
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1872 Seated Dollars

by

John W. McCloskey

In 1872, the Seated Dollar was struck at the three mints in Philadelphia, San Francisco and Carson City. The Philadelphia specimen has a mintage of over one million pieces, is relatively common today and is one of the most frequently encountered Seated Dollars. The 1872-S dollar has a mintage listed at 9,000 pieces and is one of the rare dates in the series, but not as difficult to obtain as its tiny mintage might suggest. The 1872-CC dollar is a very rare date in the Seated series, very difficult to obtain in any grade and has a listed mintage of only 3,150 pieces. The purpose of this article is to describe the die characteristics of the San Francisco and Carson City dates so that attempts to alter Philadelphia specimens to create the much rarer mintmarked dates can be detected.

1872-S DOLLARS

Several years ago I had a rare opportunity to examine a small hoard of 1872-S dollars. I cannot at this time remember how many pieces were in the lot but I would estimate the number of pieces to be close to 25. I examined the reverse of each piece carefully and concluded that all of the pieces were struck from the same reverse die. This die has a Small s mintmark measuring 1.0 mm tall, 0.8 mm wide and 2.0 mm over the right side of the letter E. The mintmark is located high up into the opening between the feather tip and the left claw. The mintmark is 0.2 mm from the tip of the feather on the right and 0.4 mm from the claw on the left.



1872-S Dollar. Small s mintmark located high in field.

On the obverse the date is set a little low in the field with the digit 1 measuring 0.9mm below the base of the rock. The tail of the digit 7 is located directly over a denticle and a long die scratch runs through the denticles below all four digits in the date.

1872-CC DOLLARS

The Carson City dollars of 1872 are very rare and difficult to obtain in any grade. However, pieces of this date do come up for sale from time to time and the date is available to the interested collector. I have seen several specimens at shows and pictures of a number of others in auction catalogues. All those that I have seen have been struck from the same dies. On the reverse the Carson City mintmark is located high up near the tip of the feather with each C measuring 1.1 mm tall and 0.8 mm wide. The two Cs are 0.6 mm distant with the left C positioned over the letter E and the right C over the space between ED. The left C is 1.6 mm over the letter E and 0.4 mm from the tip of the feather. On the obverse the date is located high in the field with the digit 1 only 0.5 mm from the base of the rock. The digit 8 is centered over a denticle and the tail of the digit 7 is located over the right side of a denticle.



1872-S Dollar. Date low in field.



1872-CC Dollar. Date high in field.



1872-CC Dollar. The dark spot in the picture between the feather tip and the olive branch is caused by foreign matter on the coin.

PHILADELPHIA OBVERSES

The large mintage for the 1872 Philadelphia dollar makes it difficult to classify the dies of this date, especially when most of my research efforts have been directed toward the mintmarked specimens. I can say however that the most commonly encountered variety has a date positioned low in the field and further left than the position on the San Francisco and Carson City dies. For this die the digit 1 in the date is located 1.1 mm below the base of the rock with the inner loops of the digit 8 centered over a denticle and the tail of the digit 7 over the space between two denticles. I have seen a second variety with a very high date located up near the base of the rock. Club member John Kroon reports that the digit 2 on the high date Philadelphia variety is located closer to the base of the rock than the corresponding digit on the Carson City obverse. With a mintage of over 1 million pieces other varieties also likely exist.

EDGE REEDING

Edge reeding has proven to be of great value in distinguishing among coins from different mints in the Seated series. With this in mind I counted the reeds on the pieces in my collection and did find that there was a difference among those pieces examined. The Carson City coin had 190 reeds. The San Francisco coin had 177 reeds and the Philadelphia coin had 179 reeds. While I must admit to not having a great deal of experience in the dollar series, my work with the reeding of the other Seated denominations leads me to feel that these reeding differences should hold up for all dollars of this year. This is particularly significant information in that the very rare Carson City dollars can be distinguished from the other pieces of this year by their edge reeding. In actual practice, I would not expect that an individual would count the reeds on a coin but the characteristic Carson City reeding can be identified by holding a Carson City and Philadelphia piece side by side and under 10X magnification noting whether the reeding on the two coins matches.

SUMMARY

I have seen only one reverse die for the Carson City and San Francisco dollars of 1872 and although I cannot conclude that others do not exist, the mintage figures would indicate that the use of additional dies was unlikely. The information in this article should help the collector attest to the genuineness of the pieces in his collection and help him recognize an altered piece that may come to his attention.

The pictures of the 1872-S and 1872-CC dollars were taken by Tom Mulvaney at Paramount International Coin Corp.

LSCC ANNUAL MEETING

The Seventh Annual Meeting of LSCC will be held in conjunction with the 89th Anniversary Convention of the American Numismatic Association. The convention will be held at the Stouffer's Cincinnati Towers Hotel in Cincinnati, Ohio from August 18-23, 1980. The club meeting will be held in the Convention Center, Room 206 on Tuesday, August 19, 1980 at 10 a.m. Please try to attend. There will be an announcement of the results of this year's election of Officers, a short business meeting and an opportunity for members to exchange ideas and stories about Seated coins.

An agenda for the business meeting has not yet been drawn up but several items have already been prepared for presentation at the meeting. These topics include: 1) a financial report for the current year from the club Secretary-Treasurer, 2) setting of club dues for the next club year, 3) discussion of the cover coin to be used on the next three issues of the Journal, 4) discussion of the plans to reprint the early issues of the Journal in a hard bound volume on Seated coins, 5) a report on the promotions conducted by the club in order to stimulate interest in the club and increase membership.

Other items will be added to the meeting agenda as they develop for discussion by the club members. Every attempt will be made to keep the discussion on each agenda item short and to the point so that we can have a brisk, informative and productive session. See you in Cincinnati.

John McCloskey
President LSCC



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A Fake 1860-O Dime Seen

A member of LSCC recently purchased a complete collection of Liberty Seated dimes and upon examination it was discovered that the 1860-O specimen was a fake. He told me about the piece at the Indiana State convention and indicated that he would send me the coin for examination. A detailed study of the coin raised more questions than it answered and I found so many things wrong with it I didn't know where to begin in trying to explain the pattern of the alterations. In fact, it is still a mystery to me as to what was done and why. I will present the problems with the piece as I see them and would invite anyone with an idea on how the alterations were made to prepare information for presentation to the club.

The first place to look for alterations on an 1860-O dime is on the reverse in the area of the New Orleans mintmark. A casual examination reveals that the mintmark is far larger than that seen on the genuine specimens. In fact, the mintmark is identical in size and style to that seen on the 1891-O dimes. This information might lead one to conclude that the New Orleans mintmark was added to the coin but I see no evidence in the area of the mintmark to indicate an alteration. I believe this conclusion is supported by the fact that there is a pointed tip to the left ribbon end below the bow, a characteristic that was not introduced into the dime series until 1876. I, therefore, have concluded that the mintmark has not been added to the reverse but that the entire reverse is that of an 1891-O dime.

There are more problems on the obverse the most obvious of which is the fact that the date is much larger than that seen on genuine dimes of 1860. Furthermore, the style of the date punches does not match the style of the date punches of this period. The obverse also shows two vertical segments



in the shield over the E in LIBERTY, a characteristic not introduced into the dime series until 1861. These facts leave little doubt that the date has been altered in some way but doesn't indicate how it was done. One clue to the alteration could be the defect in the digit 1 that can be seen at the right edge of the upright where it joins the base of the digit. This defect is the result of a broken date punch that is frequently seen on the dimes of 1891. The general style and size of the punches in the date are also similar to those used in 1891. However, the digit 0 is somewhat irregular in shape and the center opening is not even close to the typical oval shape usually seen in this digit throughout the seated years.

Another curious aspect of this piece is the unusual edge reeding that the coin possesses. All genuine New Orleans dimes that I have seen throughout the entire Seated series from 1838-0 to the 1891-0 have had 103 reeds. This reeding gauge characterizes the New Orleans issues and is possessed by no other pieces in the Seated series. The reeding on the 1860-0 dime under examination does not have the New Orleans reeding. In fact, the reeding doesn't match any reeding gauge used throughout the entire Seated series. The reeding itself does seem to be unusually strong for an average circulated coin and it can only be assumed that the reeding was added to the coin to hide some damage that was caused by the alteration procedure.

This article should serve as an example of the extent to which people will go to produce fakes of the rarities of the Seated coin series. Fortunately, the people producing the altered coins are not numismatists and they will often make errors in the alteration process that will make the pieces easy to recognize and easy to distinguish from the genuine pieces. This article should also demonstrate that knowledge of the dies of the Seated coins can help the collector detect the altered coins.

The pictures of the fake 1860-0 dime were taken by Tom Mulvaney at Paramount Interantional Coin Corp.



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1848	Medium Date AF.	8
1849/6	F-VF, dip, small marks.	13
1849-0	Good.	22
Note: All Goods have full rims.		
1849-0	VG +, old scratch on obv.	29
1851	AU, Flat rev.	80
1851-0	VG +.	13
1852	AU.	92
1853	Arrows XF.	38
1855	Arrows XF.	38
1858	Over Invert Date, VF +.	95
1858	Over Invert Date, VF.	89
1859	Barely AU, dip.	89
1863-S	Good +.	13
1867-S	VF, mounted obv.	11
1869-S	XF.	30
1869	AU, mottled, old dip.	60
1871	AU sharp, dip.	60
DIMES		
1841-0	Small o, Fine +.	\$16
1841-0	Small o, VF + halo tone.	32
1842	XF.	35
1844	XF +.	325
1847	Var 2, VF +, nice halo.	59
1848	About Fine, 7 letters.	10
1848	VF, violet & irrid.	24
1849	VF +.	20
1849	XF or nearly so.	32
1849-D	VF +.	65
1850	Fine, halo toning.	8
1853-0	F/VG +.	10
1857	AU, uneven strike.	70
1858-S	Bold XF-AU, toned, a few minor marks.	240
1872-CC	VF, expert repair right obv. field, few minor marks.	395
1873	NA, blah XF, lite cleaning.	18
1873	Arrows, VF +, lite scratches partly hidden, most rev.	24
1874	F-VF.	19
1874	VF-XF or better.	55
1876-S	Choice AU/AU, dip.	58
1882	VF-XF.	11
1887	VF +.	9

DIMES

1887-S	XF, strong head.	\$25
1889-S	VF-XF, scuffs & lite damage well hidden.	20
1890	VF-XF.	11
QUARTERS		
1838	VF thin old rev. scratch.	\$32
1840-0	NO barely VF, Rev scratch.	27
1842-0	Small date, Good.	135
1843-0	Small O, VF.	55
1845	AU, dip, sharp.	125
1849-0	VG-10, SOLD to LSCC member	
1854	AU Oull.	189
1855-D	VF.	135
1856	VF.	24
1860-S	VG/AG, marks.	69
1863	AXF.	79
1865-S	VF old cln, nice.	125
1868-S	AXF nick in obv. field, old dip, dull.	99
1873-S	Arrows Fine.	45
1876	Fine +.	13
1877	Fine +.	13
1878-S	F-VF many marks under toning, especially rev.	100

HALVES

1841-0	Fine	19
1844	AU-55, sharp, whiz, artifical retoning	79
1845-0	ND Fine, Star 1, part of rock. Star 2 absent due to die polish.	40
1847-D	XF, typical.	49
1856-0	Fine +, very nice.	20
1857	VF.	25
1858-S	About Fine.	21
1858-S	Fine.	25
1860-0	AU, sharp, lite cln.	115
1861	VF.	25
1861	VF-XF.	32
1863-S	AU, sl. soft.	105
1866	XF dark gray.	90
1872-CC	Good, graffiti left obv. field.	14
1872-CC	Good, old cln, small rim nick.	19
1873	Arrows AG +.	11

What Would an 1873-S Standard Dollar Look Like?

In his excellent text on the coinage of 1873, Harry X Boosel presents documentary evidence to show that the Seated dollar was struck in San Francisco in 1873. Mr. Boosel lists a mintage of 700 pieces for the 1873-S Standard Dollar and presents a copy of a letter dated March 5, 1873 showing that a package of Assay Coins including one Standard Dollar was shipped from San Francisco by Wells Fargo to the Superintendent of the U.S. Mint in Philadelphia. Yet there is no record of this date existing in any collection today. It is believed that all of the 1873-S Standard dollars on hand were melted at the mint shortly after April 1, 1873, the date on which the Coinage Act of this year increased the weight of our silver coins slightly to conform to metric standards.

Despite the fact that the 1873-S Standard Dollar is unknown to exist today, rumors of the existence of a long hidden piece persist. Such rumors should not be dismissed as out of hand in light of the recent discovery of the previously unknown 1870-S half dime and the fact the date was known to have actually been struck. Yet, should an example of this date surface, how could we determine if it was genuine? Besides the usual tests for weight and specific gravity and a microscopic study of the surfaces in search of alterations or repairs, a study of the die patterns of the period might cast some additional light on the evidence available for certification of the specimen. While it is sheer speculation on my part I feel that an educated guess of the die characteristics of the 1873-S Standard dollar is a worthy exercise in the expectation that altered or counterfeit specimens of the date may eventually appear.

Should an 1873-S Standard dollar surface I would expect that the date would be identical in style and size to the date seen on the 1873 Philadelphia dollar. That is, it would have a Closed 3 and the style of each digit should match those of the Philadelphia specimen. This is expected because very rarely was more than one date punch used in a single year to strike pieces of a given denomination. Furthermore, the position of the date relative to the denticles and the Seated Liberty design is likely to differ

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from that seen on the Philadelphia pieces. This difference is expected because different obverse dies were used at the branch mints from those used in Philadelphia, and while all of the dies were prepared in Philadelphia, the dates were punched individually into the dies resulting in minor differences in date placement from die to die.

On the reverse I would expect the mintmark to be rather small and placed high up toward the tip of the feather and the left claw. This mintmark placement would be consistent with that seen on the 1872-S dollar and that seen on the 1873-S quarters and half dollars. In fact, it is not unlikely that the reverse would be struck from the same die that was used on the 1872-S dollars and pictured on page 19 of this issue. If not, I would expect the mintmark to be from the same punch.

It is certainly possible that a genuine 1873-S Standard dollar would not have all the die characteristics as indicated above but any violation of the established patterns of the period would have to be critically examined. While no one is likely to purchase a rarity of this magnitude without proper certification, a knowledge of what characteristics to look for in a genuine specimen would be very helpful in a preliminary study of the piece.

The Editor

LSCC Half Dollar Census

Census forms started arriving on May 14th and by June 3rd, 44 members had responded. Individual inputs varied with eighteen members reporting fewer than 10 coins each and ten members reporting collections of 90 or more. The total census count now stands at 2111 which makes the average input about 48 coins.

Many members indicated problems in identifying some of the varieties, especially Type I and Type II varieties of 1858-1864 and 1876-1877. John McCloskey's article on 1862-S half dollars in Issue #5 indicated the old hub (Type I) varieties found during 1858-1864 have bold heavy letters in the legend and the lower right edge of the letter L in HALF extends only slightly beyond its upper edge while the new hub (Type II) varieties have lighter punched letters and the lower right edge of L extends well beyond the upper part of the letter. Also, I have found that all Type II coins (1858-1866-S No Motto) have a raised lump (dot) on the upper outside edge of the eagle's left leg (observer's left) due to a flaw on the Type II hub.

Type I and Type II varieties of the 1876-1877 era can be identified by examining the lower bud on the olive branch above H in HALF. Type I reverses have an open bud while Type II reverses have a closed bud.

I plan to continue gathering census information through the summer months and I hope to be able to report some detailed results for Issue #19 of the Journal. Member response has been very good up to this point, but I would like to encourage other members to join in and be counted.

Randy Wiley
LSCC #251

Unique Set Liberty Seated Proof Quarters 1856-1891

McIntire Rare Coins is proud to offer for sale one of the finest known complete sets of Proof Seated Liberty Quarter Dollars. The thirty-seven coins, from 1856 to 1891, including both the 1873 No Arrows and With Arrows variety, range from choice proof to Superb Cameo Proof.

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Complete sets are, of course limited by the excessive rarity of the early issues. It is estimated by numismatic researchers that fewer than 30 pieces were struck in 1856. Only 20 to 25 pieces are known today. Breen estimates that less than 15 Proofs were struck of the extremely rare 1857. Of the 12 survivors, 10 apparently are either permanently impounded in museums or housed in renowned collections that may never be broken. In 1858 and 1859 some 100 proofs were minted each year, but fewer than 60 examples of each date survive today.

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QUARTERS

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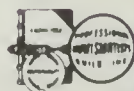
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Letters To The Editor

Recently I acquired another 1859-P quarter with the Type II Reverse (convex eagle eye). I have also located an 1860-P quarter with the Type II Reverse. I now have the following quarters with both Type I and Type II Reverses: 1859-P, 1860-P and 1861-P.

I am presently looking for the Type II Obverse (two vertical segments over the letter **E** in **LIBERTY**) on 1858 and 1859 quarters. Has anyone seen these? Or a Type I obverse on an 1860-P quarter?

Jerald Hueber
LSCC #243

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Membership Statistics

LSCC currently has 277 active members who live in 39 states and the District of Columbia. Broken into geographic location, there are 93 members who live along the East coast, 80 living in the Midwestern states from Ohio to Nebraska, 60 from the West and 44 from the South. Individual states with the most members are: California (35), New York (25), Ohio (16), Pennsylvania (16), Texas (14), Florida (12), Illinois (11), Michigan (11), Massachusetts (11), Missouri (11) and Virginia (11). In spite of our efforts to increase club membership we have had a stable membership of about 280 members over the past two years.

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Your comments on any of the articles, ads or club policies are invited. This is your club and the Officers are dedicated to operating it on behalf of the members. Address any comments to:

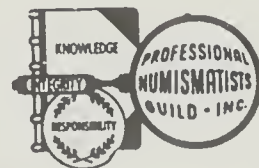
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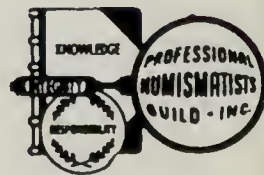


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